

FOSTER PARENTS AND THE STRESS RELATED TO THIS ACTIVITY

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Abstract: Foster parents are responsible people, authorized by the National Authority for Child Protection and Adoption, who provide a safe, secure and stable environment for those abandoned, abused or neglected. The nature of their work involves higher levels of occupational stress, particularly related to parent-children relation developed, family understanding and permanent assistance and guidance from trained social workers.

Keywords: foster care, foster parent, occupational stress

Rezumat: Asistenții maternali profesioniști sunt persoane responsabile, atestate de către Autoritatea Națională pentru Protecția și Adopția Copilului, care asigură un mediu sănătos, sigur și stabil pentru creșterea copiilor abandonați, abuzați sau respinși de propriile familii. Natura muncii pe care o desfășoară implică nivele crescute de stres în special relaționate cu relația părinte-copil dezvoltată în cadrul muncii, înțelegerea familiei și controlul și ghidarea permanentă din partea asistenților sociali.

Cuvinte cheie: asistența maternală, asistent maternal, stres ocupațional

INTRODUCTION

Fostering is not as straightforward as it appears. It involves aspects of national legislation as coordinated through the main beds for children weal fare, the guidance of local Departments for Children Protection, and the participation of child welfare organization, and last but not least, natural and foster families.

Fostering is a way of providing family life for someone else's child in your own home when they are unable to live with their birth family. Actually the foster parent become a parent for these children, and has a height responsibility.

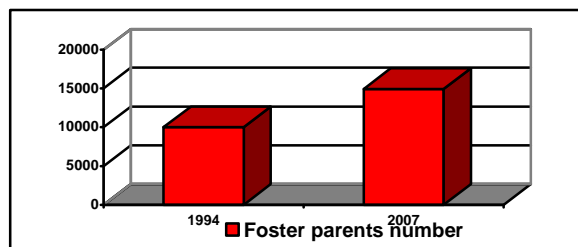
Romanian's Foster Care

The start of the first foster care programme in Romania, set up by the Holt organization in the county of Constanța and in the city of Bucharest meant for that time (the years 1993-1994) an important point in the experimentation of a new alternative to institutionalizations, as well as of the practice of foster care in Romania (UNICEF, 1997). This experience built the foundations for the development and the diversification of foster care in Romania; at the same

time, this programme was also a guide for best practices and the set-up of the frameworks for legislation development and implementation.

Foster care policy developed a lot latest year. Before 1994 there was 10.000 foster parents and 100.000 children needed foster care. The end of March 2007, Romania had 14.929 foster parents taking care of 19.932 children. (Picture no. 1).

Picture no. 1: Number of foster parents in Romania between 1994 and 2007



Stress among foster parents

There are several reason why foster care parents are at risk for developing psychological stress. Foster parents work daily; 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, with children how have been traumatized. They listen to their stories and feel their hurt. Empathy is often the most important tool foster parents bring to help the children in their care. Foster care help a child to develop a sense of belonging in his home even though the stay is temporary, he must be able to love a child who, because of a fear of rejection, does not easily love him back. Unfortunately, the more emphatic they are the greater their risk for internalizing stress is. Being a foster care means to tolerate major failures and small success. Foster parents don't have enough time for recovering; they are often deprived of the "time off", so working over and over can have a negative effect on even the most trained, devoted, resilient foster parents. Many foster parents have some personal loss or even traumatic experience in their own life. One of the most difficult tasks for a foster care is to recognize if they are suffering for stress.

CONCLUSION

Examined the nature and extend of stress among foster parents, there were found higher than average

levels of stress, particularly on subscales related to parent children dysfunctional interaction and raising a difficult child. There are more stress category, related to: children characteristics, parent – children interaction, family cohesion, parental adjustment, and children protection and adoption service issues.

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